

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING



Scottish
Advisory Forum
on Europe



BETWEEN:

The European Economic and Social Committee

AND

Scottish Advisory Forum on Europe (SAFE)

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) establishes a formal framework for regular and effective cooperation in the identified areas of common interest. This MoU does not create any kind of partnership or association between the signatories and does not provide for any exclusivity in cooperation. As an instrument, this MoU is not intended to create legal rights or obligations for the parties.

2. BACKGROUND

The **EU-UK Follow-up Committee** was set up by the EESC in 2021 to continue the work of the EESC's Brexit Follow-Group, particularly by fostering relations with UK civil society. The Committee's overarching objectives are the following:

- Building and fostering strong relations with key actors of the EU-UK relations, most importantly re-building bridges with UK civil society organisations, using outreach and strong communication.
- Liaising with the main EU institutions (European Commission, European Parliament, Council) as well as with UK institutional actors (UK Mission in Brussels, Houses of Parliament, Devolved Administrations).
- Monitoring the implementation of the most relevant EU-UK agreements, notably the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement and the Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland.
- Monitoring other agreements and potential areas of cooperation.

- Monitoring any element of the new EU-UK relationship with particular importance for civil society.
- Centralising EESC feedback on relevant EU-UK issues.

The **Scottish Advisory Forum on Europe (SAFE)** is a new project set up to identify and advocate for the priorities of Scotland’s civil society organisations and the communities they represent, following the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union. The aims of SAFE are:

- Explore how the implementation of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) is impacting Scottish communities, organisations and the people they represent.
- Promote a strong voice for Scotland’s civil society to be able to advocate for their interests, conduct social research into the impact of Brexit, collaborate to identify solutions for the issues facing Scotland, as well find new areas for improved alignment with the EU.

3. UNDERSTANDING

The two parties mutually understand and agree that they both endeavour for a strong civil society voice in both the EU and the UK, and for maintaining and building relationships between civil society organisations in the EU and the UK. Being aware that many EU-UK issues are covered by the EU Domestic Advisory Group under the EU-UK TCA¹ and UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement Domestic Advisory Group², and that there is therefore a need to avoid unnecessary duplications, they undertake to identify, monitor and share information on potential areas for cooperation around any element of the new EU-UK relationship of particular importance for civil society, for example in the following areas of common interest:

- Pursuing cooperation on issues arising from the implementation of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement³, particularly;
 - post-Brexit mobility issues, for example in relation to labour, young people’s opportunities and the creative industries;
 - impacts on the rights of both EU citizens in the UK and UK citizens in the EU;
 - the implications of Brexit for investment in the UK's renewable energy supply chain and adherence to renewable energy targets;
 - post-Brexit impacts on living standards, public services and the delivery of a wellbeing economy;

¹ <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/sections-other-bodies/other/eu-domestic-advisory-group-under-eu-uk-tca#:~:text=The%20EU%20DAG%20under%20the,economic%2C%20social%20and%20environmental%20stakeholders.>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-eu-trade-and-cooperation-agreement-domestic-advisory-group>

³ https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/relations-non-eu-countries/relations-united-kingdom/eu-uk-withdrawal-agreement_en

- Monitoring other issues arising from the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement, as well as from the EU-UK TCA, if needed and in cooperation with the EU DAG under the TCA.

4. WORKING METHODS

- To be able to pursue effectively their cooperation in the above areas of mutual interest, the two parties agree that there is a need for an exercise of mapping existing relationships, which could then serve as a basis for setting out the forms of cooperation to be pursued.
- To ensure regular and effective cooperation, the two parties agree to invite representatives of their respective bodies to each other's meetings on a regular basis, including additional opportunities to join discussions, debates, and plenary sessions as appropriate. They also agree to also hold informal meeting between their representatives, as required.
- To explore additional methods of information sharing, for example through joint events and visits; cultural exchange opportunities; and input into the production of information reports in areas of shared relevance or interest to both parties.

5. FINANCING

- The cooperation between the EESC and the Scottish Advisory Forum on Europe (SAFE) will not imply the allocation of any additional funds or financial resources to support and implement activities arising from the present memorandum, each party shall cover the full costs of its participation in any aspect of the above cooperation in accordance with its own policies, rules and regulations.

6. ENTRY INTO FORCE, AMENDMENT AND TERMINATION

- This Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into force on the date when the last of the two Parties signs.
- Any proposal for amendment of this Memorandum of Understanding shall be submitted to the competent authorities of both parties for approval.
- Either party may terminate this Memorandum of Understanding by giving no less than three months' written notice to the other party. Any such termination will be without prejudice to the orderly completion of any ongoing activity pursuant to this Memorandum of Understanding as of the time of such notice.

- In accordance with Rule 19(1) of the Rules of Procedure, the President may delegate his authority of representation regarding the signing of this Memorandum of Understanding to a vice-president or, if necessary, to another member.

Signed in duplicate in....., on

For the EESC

For Scottish Advisory Forum on Europe

Oliver Röpke
President of the European Economic and
Social Committee

Irene Oldfather
Chair of Scottish Advisory Forum on Europe